

**Evaluation of the
Indianapolis Mayor Sponsored
Charter Schools**

Christel House Academy South

**6th Year Charter Review of
the Second School Charter**

2014-2015 School Year

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OFFICE OF EDUCATION INNOVATION

Office of the Mayor of Indianapolis

SIXTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

Christel House Academy South

November 19-21, 2014

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office Sixth Year Charter Review (SYCR) is designed to assess the development of the school as it finishes its sixth year of operation, and serves as an evaluation of the school now that it is well established. The Sixth Year Charter Review Protocol is based on the *Performance Framework*, which is used to determine a school's success relative to a common set of indicators, as well as school-based goals.

Consistent with the Indianapolis Mayor's Office Performance Framework, the following four core questions and sub-questions are examined to determine a school's success:

Is the educational program a success?

- 1.1. *Is the school's academic performance meeting state expectation, as measured by Indiana's accountability system?*
- 1.2. *Are students making sufficient and adequate gains, as measured by the Indiana Growth model?*
- 1.3. *Does the school demonstrate that students are improving, the longer they are enrolled at the school?*
- 1.4. *Is the school providing an equitable education to students of all races and socioeconomic backgrounds?*
- 1.5. *Is the school's attendance rate strong?*
- 1.6. *Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?*
- 1.7. *Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?*

Is the organization in sound fiscal health?

- 2.1. *Short term Health: Does the school demonstrate the ability to pay its obligations in the next 12 months?*
- 2.2. *Long term Health: Does the organization demonstrate long term financial health?*
- 2.3. *Does the organization demonstrate it has adequate financial management and systems?*

Is the organization effective and well-run?

- 3.1. *Is the school leader strong in his or her academic and organizational leadership?*
- 3.2. *Does the school satisfactorily comply with all its organizational structure and governance obligations?*
- 3.3. *Is the school's board active, knowledgeable and abiding by appropriate policies, systems and processes in its oversight?*
- 3.4. *Does the school's board work to foster a school environment that is viable and effective?*
- 3.5. *Does the school comply with applicable laws, regulations and provision of the charter agreement relating to the safety and security of the facility?*

Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

- 4.1. *Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*
- 4.2. *Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*
- 4.3. *For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?*
- 4.4. *Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*
- 4.5. *Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?*
- 4.6. *Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?*
- 4.7. *Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*
- 4.8. *Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*
- 4.9 *Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?*
- 4.10 *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English as Second Language (ESL) students?*

COMPLETION OF THE SIXTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

As part of its oversight of charter schools, the Mayor's Office of Education Innovation has authorized Research & Evaluation Resources (RER) to conduct site visits of schools in their sixth year of operation. The purpose is to present the school and the OEI a professional judgment on conditions and practices at the school, which are best provided through an external perspective. This report uses multiple sources of evidence to understand the school's performance. Evidence collection begins with a review of key documents and continues on-site through additional document review, classroom visits and interviews with any number of stakeholders. Findings provided by the site visits can be used to celebrate what the school is doing well and prioritize its areas for improvement in preparation for renewal. It is the task of the site visit team to report on the following pre-identified aspects of the *Performance Framework* and to assist OEI in its completion of the SYCR Protocol: *Responses to sub-questions 4.1- 4.10 of Core Question 4.*

The outcome of this review will provide the school with a written report that includes a judgment and supporting evidence on various aspects of the school, based on a of indicators¹ developed for each of the four core questions and sub-questions in the *Performance Framework*. The assessment system utilizes the following judgments:

Does not meet standard

Approaching standard

Meets standard

¹ Rubric indicators are subject to revision by the OEI.

Christel House Academy South

Christel House Academy was one of the first schools granted a charter by the Mayor of Indianapolis, receiving its charter from the Mayor of Indianapolis' Office in 2001 and opening in August of 2002. At the school's opening, CHA provided instruction to students in grades K-4, and added an additional grade each year thereafter. In 2009, CHA amended its original charter to include grades 9-12, housing the new high school in a state of the art building attached to the original Christel House Academy on the south side of Indianapolis.

Since its opening in 2002, Christel House Academy (CHA) has been an agent of transformation for traditionally underserved and at-risk students in Indianapolis. The stated goal of Christel House Academy is to break the generational cycle of poverty by providing young people with the academic and life skills necessary to achieve success in the 21st Century. This mission has extended to Christel House DORS, and adult oriented, credit recovery program that confers high school diplomas rather than a GED. As noted in their application for replication, the Christel House Academy program works by providing (1) high quality and challenging academic curriculum; (2) on-site mental health and social services, (3) outreach to parents and families and (4) art, music and extracurricular activities. Christel House Academy (CHA) received its charter from the Mayor of Indianapolis' Office in 2001 and opened in August 2002 providing instruction to students in grades K-4, adding an additional grade each year thereafter. CHA amended its original charter in 2009 to include grades 9-12.

In 2010, Christel House Academy adopted the TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement. TAP has four interrelated components that provide a comprehensive system to help teachers improve their instruction and the academic performance of their students: multiple career paths, ongoing applied professional growth, instructionally focused accountability, and performance based compensation. The TAP system is still being successfully implemented at Christel House Academy South, with many of best practices described in this report developing as part of the TAP initiative at CHA-South.

In the 2014-15 academic year, CHA-South made the decision to incorporate the new Indiana standards into instruction by adopting new curriculum at all three levels of the school--elementary, middle and high schools. In grades K-6, the International Primary Curriculum was replaced with ReadyGen for Language Arts and Envision for Math, while at the middle and high school levels aspects of project-based, experiential learning previously used at CHA-South were kept, and Springboard, a print and online curriculum for grades 6-12 provided by the College Board was added to provide additional educational materials for the teaching staff to use when designing their curriculum.

The Evaluation Process

Research & Evaluation Resources staff engaged in a number of evidence-collecting activities. The focus of this evaluation was to gauge perceptions of key stakeholders at the school in relation to the areas of the performance framework that are part of the evaluation. RER conducted focus group discussions with students, staff, and parents, as well as interviews with the school administration. These focus groups, interviews and classroom observations for Christel House Academy South, which is comprised of an elementary school with grades K-6, a middle school with grades 7-8, and a high school comprised of a Lower House with grades 9 & 10 and an Upper House with grades 11 and 12, were conducted over a 3 day period, November 19-21, 2014. The elementary school and the middle/high school will be evaluated separately on the standards that apply specifically to each school, such as the quality of classroom instruction. Standards and indicators are listed with relevant evidence that was used to determine the recommended rating. Following the discussion of each indicator, a summary of strengths and areas for attention are provided for the core question.

On November 19-21, 2014, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 6th year review of Christel House Academy South. Sixteen classrooms were observed using the instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. Each observation lasted approximately 30 minutes, and over half of the teaching staff was observed once. Classroom observers spent 7.6 hours (456 minutes) observing 16 classrooms, 348 students, and 16 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 29 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 21.7:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Christel House Academy South Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the observations conducted. Focus groups and interviews with school leadership and parents were conducted on November 20 and 21, 2014, and took place at the school.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

CHRISTEL HOUSE ACADEMY SOUTH

<i>Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?</i>	<i>Finding</i>
<i>Elementary School</i> <i>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i>	Cannot be Evaluated
<i>Middle & High Schools</i> <i>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i>	Cannot be Evaluated
<i>Elementary School</i> <i>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>Middle & High Schools</i> <i>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.9 Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.10 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English as Second Language (ESL) students?</i>	Meets Standard

Christel House Academy South

Elementary School

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Data was not available to evaluate indicators b & c, consequently no rating was given.

Data gathered through classroom observations, focus group interviews and interviews with the school leadership revealed that the curriculum being enacted at Christel House Academy South elementary school (CHA-South) is standards-based and aligns with the Indiana State Standards (indicator a). Focus group interviews with the teaching staff, as well as interviews with the Head of Elementary, Tracy Westerman, and the Head of Curriculum and Instruction, Sarah Weimer, revealed that the school leadership and teaching staff are working to adapt Christel House Academy South curriculum to the new state standards. Ms. Westerman.

Christel House Academy South is participating in the Teacher Advancement Program and many of their curriculum review and data practices arise from the practices of the TAP program. Christel House Academy South elementary school has recently adopted two new curriculums, ReadyGen for Language Arts and Envision for Math, to accommodate the new Indiana State Standards and are in the process of adapting the Scope and Sequence documents that were supplied by the textbook publishers to the needs of their students. Consequently, the current curriculum maps that are in use are the Scope and Sequence documents provided by the ReadyGen curriculum, and the curriculum maps and supporting documents provided by Envision. The Scope and Sequence documents from ReadyGen are very detailed and provide a great deal of information regarding the standards being

addressed, the Performance Based Assessment Tasks, Enduring Understandings, and suggestions for supporting texts. The Curriculum Maps and materials provided by Envision were substantive, included pacing guides, strategies for differentiated instruction, core learning objectives, and other useful information and strategies. Thus, the Scope and Sequence documents from ReadyGen and the materials from Envision do provide a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that are prioritized and focused on core learning objectives (indicator d), and the staff was observed to be using the program materials provided by the curriculum to effectively deliver instruction (indicator e).

At this point in the process of adapting the curriculum to the needs of the elementary school at Christel House Academy South, there has not been an opportunity to conduct a systematic review of the curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance (indicator b), nor has the elementary school teaching staff at CHA-South had time to regularly review the curriculum maps to ensure that all state standards are covered in time for testing (indicator c). Consequently, CHA-South cannot be evaluated on Standard 4.1. It is important to note, however, that the elementary school has a robust and effective process in place to conduct a systematic review of the curriculum to ensure that all state standards are met and that gaps in student performance are addressed. When asked about the systematic review of the curriculum to identify gaps and ensure that all standards are being met, Ms. Weimer explained that "K-5 is just adopting the new text to accommodate the new standards, so everything in the building is new. We will be working with grade level teams to design that process with the master teachers in cluster meetings. They are all working on that in cluster, with instructional plans based on the TAP rubric for each grade level. They take the scope and sequence documents from the book publishers and modify and add to them—they have them in paper form and they are handwriting them on their curriculum books."

Focus group interviews with the CHA-South elementary teaching staff revealed that they are enthusiastic about the new curriculum, and are excited about the process of adapting ReadyGen and Envision for their students. They described a well-designed process that is being implemented in the TAP cluster meetings in which they perform long range planning as well as working on specific lesson plans. Using the new Indiana State Standards, they are currently cross-referencing the curriculum supplied by Envision and ReadyGen from the Common Core to the new standards. Then they look through the Christel House Academy South calendar to fit in the topics and make sure that they are adequately covering the new standards. Describing this process in their own words, the staff members relayed a process in which "We dove into the new Indiana standards, and cross-referenced them to the new curriculum since it's Common Core." Another teacher explained, "the first project was translating to Indiana Standards, then we familiarized ourselves with each unit. Then we each looked at a topic in Envision and make sure that it's the X (redacted for confidentiality) grade standards for Indiana, and then we go through the school calendar and fit the topic in it, with all the new information." Finally, another noted that "we used the curriculum's pacing guide and we adapted it."

When asked why Christel House Academy South chose to adopt a new curriculum, particularly

given all the changes being made at the state level, the teachers replied, "This is a long range process. We wanted to get a fresh start and a curriculum that matched the rigor of the new state standards. We will revisit it a lot, and we will be constantly updating the rigor." The teaching staff also noted that they "have a lot of freedom to change it all, and provide more consistency. This work will benefit us in years to come." Another noted, "we are developing more across the curriculum--TAP has helped us see that. We have more consistency and more rigor."

The faculty noted that the transition to the new curriculums has gone very well, and that they have "gotten used to it (ReadyGen) and plan to use it. ReadyGen is very high rigor, and the students have stepped up with the rigor level of the curriculum." They also noted that they "like the math curriculum and the time for planning in cluster- we are all on the same page and on the same curriculum." Another teacher noted, "we can share resources and see how others are using the curriculum that's available to use... it's helping with our development as teachers and it's really helped us work as a team, not just within the houses." When directly asked if they found it difficult to "own" the new curriculums given that they were currently relying on the publisher's provided materials, the overwhelming response was that they "feel like we own the curriculum. They (CHA-South leadership) provide the curriculum, but they encourage us and trust us as professionals to supplement the materials and make the curriculum our own." Another noted, "we put our own twist on the curriculum." An examination of a curriculum map that was provided by the leadership at Christel House Academy South revealed that the process of adapting the curriculum to the needs of CHA-South students is underway. The "curriculum map" that was provided, along with the classroom materials from the publisher, showed the process of matching the school calendar with the topics to be covered during each week has been completed.

Christel House Academy South has provided teachers with a great environment within which to teach. All of the classrooms observed contained the programs and materials to deliver the curriculum effectively (indicator f). When asked about the availability of materials, the teaching staff expressed satisfaction with the materials and support provided by Christel House Academy South.

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South elementary school has adopted a standards-based curriculum that provides the teaching staff with a wealth of opportunities to develop a strong curriculum that meets the needs of their students.

Processes are in place for the CHA-South teaching staff to modify and adapt the Envision and ReadyGen curriculums to the needs of Christel House Academy South students.

The TAP program has led to the development of the CHA-South curriculum review process, and has been very effective in building a cohesive and collegial teaching faculty.

Recommendations: School leaders, and in particular the Head of Elementary and the Head of Curriculum and Instruction, should monitor the process of adapting the Envision

and ReadyGen curriculum to the needs of the Christel House Academy South elementary school students.

Christel House Academy South

Middle and High Schools

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Data was not available to evaluate indicators b & c, consequently no rating was given.

As was the case at the elementary school, copies of the curriculum maps being used at the middle and high school were not available at the time of the site visit, due to the ongoing transition to the new Indiana state standards. The middle and high school staff are currently implementing the Spring Board curriculum in math and English, as well creating many supplemental lessons to augment the curriculum to meet student needs. Focus group interviews and an examination of the lesson plans provided by the middle and high school teaching staff revealed that the new Indiana state standards figure prominently in the lessons currently being delivered, however since the process of developing the curriculum maps for the high school is ongoing it is impossible to say that the curriculum as a whole will align with the state standards (indicator a).

Currently, the courses offered at the middle and high schools are a both traditional courses and Project Based Learning (PBL) courses. During focus group interviews, the teaching staff explained that when the high school opened 5 years ago, the entire curriculum was based on Expeditionary Learning. As the high school grew, the addition of new staff members and staff turnover impacted the faculty's knowledge and use of Expeditionary Learning. Consequently, the current middle school staff (most of whom have been with Christel House Academy South for several years) are using

project based learning (PBL), while the high school teachers are using Springboard, a print and online curriculum for grades 6-12 provided by the College Board.

Part of the curriculum and lesson planning design process for the middle and high schools are based on practices of Project Based Learning. For those classes that used a PBL curriculum, a unique process was described to ensure integration of the Indiana State Standards were covered in projects that were cross-curricular in nature. For those cross-curricular courses, staff members from each area work together on the curriculum map and would write the standards to be covered on strips of paper, and then physically move the strips to the topics to be covered by the PBL projects. This process was repeated until all the "standard strips" were placed with a project, or had been added as morning work.

The process for adapting the curriculum of Springboard for the middle and high schools is similar to that of the elementary. The Springboard website has suggested pacing guides, which the teaching staff are revising and aligning to the Indiana State Standards. The teaching staff described a process of aligning the material from Springboard to what was needed for the high school students, and then creating a curriculum map from that process. It was reported that the Christel House Academy South leadership did not require a certain format for the curriculum maps, but instead mentored the teachers in the development of high quality curriculum materials. When asked how vertical and horizontal alignment is obtained in the curriculum, the teaching staff reported that "we use the state standards-- we all have to hit the standards so we start there." Another noted that "we have the opportunity to align rigor across the grades with the TAP structure, and on PD days we will meet as a department or a grade and make sure that we all know what we will cover and check for vertical and horizontal alignment." It was reported that GoogleDocs which outline the standards to be covered in each course are shared within grade levels.

The processes described by the middle and high school teachers do provide a mechanism for prioritizing and focusing on core learning objectives across grade levels and content areas (indicator d), as well as reviewing the scope and sequence in time for testing (indicator c). However, just as is the case with the elementary school, these processes have yet to result in a fully explicated and documented curriculum for review. Consequently, there is not enough data to evaluate Standard 4.1. It was clear from the focus group interviews that the middle and high school teaching staff are enthusiastic and dedicated educators who will be fully implementing the new state standards in their curriculum, and will be revising the curriculum to provide a quality education for their students. As one middle school teacher noted, "our goal is setting up kids for success at the high school level, so we focus on data, testing and assessments. We use the data, and we own the curriculum." Another noted that "it's a living document-- one that we have brainstormed and designed together."

The systematic review of the curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance (indicator b) is performed by Ms. Weimer, and to a lesser extent, by the teaching staff during TAP meetings. As one teacher noted, "we don't do curriculum maps top down-- we will go through the new curriculum and map it ourselves. The curriculum maps will be collected (by the CHA-South leadership) and progress monitored through cluster." It was also explained that Ms. Weimer, the

Head of Curriculum and Instruction, performs progress monitoring for each class and intervenes when the student data suggests that a course is not going well. As the process was described by one instructor, "She gives us autonomy and trust--if she finds a problem with the data at that point in time they went in and looked at my curriculum map and found that I had strayed from it. They worked with me and intervened." Student data is used and reviewed during TAP cluster meetings, with the master teachers working with Ms. Weimer to provide guidance and direction to the teaching staff during this process. Ms. Weimer described the process as "I review the student-level data and import it into the data documents. I lead an overview data dig with the Heads of Schools, Master Teacher, and Department Heads where we identify areas of strength and concern. They then lead student level data digs with their teachers, who then use the data and data documents in making curriculum and instructional decisions in their classrooms and with their interventionists. The Coaches and Department Heads then follow up with teachers in coaching meetings where they also analyze subsequent classroom level assignment and assessment data. I follow up, monitor, and support Coaches and Department Heads in biweekly meetings."

Focus group interviews with the middle and high school staff revealed that they uniformly use curricular documents and materials to effectively deliver instruction (indicator e). Overall, the teaching staff noted that Christel House Academy South provides them with the materials and infrastructure needed to provide a rigorous education for their students (indicator f), however, there were issues noted in the one-to-one tablet initiative and how it was being implemented at the school. Specifically, the noted that the student management software installed on the tablets, Curriculum Loft, is not meeting the needs of the faculty or the students. The tablets are designed to be used as e-books, calculators, personal computers, and e-learning devices. The faculty reported that they had mixed success with the tablets as e-books, with some reporting great success and others reporting that they would no longer use them in that manner. The larger problem as reported by the faculty is the speed of wifi as it interacts with the software on the tablets. Several teachers noted that simple e-learning techniques, such as using the tablet for "do-nows" or for "exit tickets" were impossible given how slowly the tablet loaded and refreshed content. An additional concern is that the tablets are not "student friendly" and that their use has created a "negative attitude toward the tablet."

Mr. Dahnke responded to the problems with the tablets by noting that when the tablets were being rolled out at CHA-South the vendor substituted the wrong tablet for the one ordered by CHA-South, and then had to recall the incorrect tablet replace it with the correct tablet. This all took valuable time during the which the technology was not available for the time scheduled for training. As Mr. Dahnke noted "lack of training on the software and hardware is the primary issue. This has caused frustration as many issues have had to be worked out, while teachers were trying to implement the new technology." The CHA-South leadership and teaching staff are optimistic that these problems will fade as staff and students become more familiar with the technology.

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South middle and high school teachers are effectively implementing the TAP program to adapt develop a rigorous curriculum for their students.

Processes are in place to develop a strong cross-curricular curriculum that effectively prepares middle school students for high school, and high school students for college.

Recommendations: Encourage the teaching staff to continue updating and revising their curriculum maps.

A strong process for leadership review of any new curricular documents will ensure alignment and rigor throughout the middle and high school curriculum.

Close monitoring in the future of the use of the tablets and the tablet software will ensure that the one-to-one computer initiative is a success.

Christel House Academy South

Elementary School

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.

No significant concerns were found.

Classroom observations revealed that the curriculum at Christel House Academy South elementary school is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with all 9 out of 9 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan. The lesson plans provided were all of very high quality, with the state standards to be covered clearly noted. The amount of detail varied among the lesson plans, but all of the provided enough detail regarding the state standards being covered or the learning objectives for that day to be useful guiding documents. Many of the lesson plans were extremely detailed and very well done. It was also noted that all of the lesson plans contained core learning objectives which aligned to the state standard being covered for that day.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, the majority of instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b). As noted above, the majority of the lesson plans provided by the teacher who were observed did contain core-learning objectives, and the classroom observations revealed that all of the instructors did deliver a lesson focused on learning objectives. The classroom observations revealed all instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c).

The instructors at Christel House Academy South elementary school were all observed to be using direct instruction or group work during the classroom observations (indicator d). An examination of the provided lesson plans did not show explicitly labeled differentiation strategies in the lesson plans, however, closer examination revealed that the very detailed lesson plans did include a variety

of activities that would appeal to students with different learning styles. One instructor differentiated the difficulty of a reading assignment for her class, using Reading Circles that required students to demonstrate understanding through multiple learning styles. The lesson plans shows that the teaching staff at Christel House Academy South are differentiating instruction for their students, however, it would be a best practice to include a section of the lesson plan that explicitly labels activities that differentiate learning for students in order to provide more awareness and focus among the teaching staff regarding the need to differentiate.

The teaching staff reported that information from classroom observations was relayed to them soon after the observations occurred, and that they received sufficient feedback on instructional practices through the TAP model (indicator e).

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South has a strong teaching staff, who present rigorous and challenging content throughout the school.

Christel House Academy South is data-driven. Teachers receive timely and accurate data regarding student performance, and they use that data in curricular planning.

School leadership conduct frequent classroom observations, and use that data to improve instruction.

Recommendations: Include a section on Lesson Plans that explicitly lists strategies to differentiate instruction in the classroom.

Christel House Academy South

Middle and High Schools

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.

No significant concerns were found.

Classroom observations using the rubric of the Office of Education Innovation revealed that the curriculum at Christel House Academy South middle and high schools is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with 6 out of 7 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan (four lesson plans were not provided). An examination of lesson plans, which included lesson plans for the day from all staff (not just those who were observed) revealed that most of the lesson plans student learning objectives, often in the form of Learning Targets, and a lesson sequence. Many lesson plans also identified strategies and best practices for delivery of the educational content. The majority of the lesson plans explicitly listed the state standards to be addressed, but several were lacking in many details, including the standards to be addressed. The quality and level of detail varied greatly among the lesson plans, with some including enough detail to serve as a guide to instruction and others containing very minimal content, lacking essential information such as the date the lesson plan is to be implemented.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, that instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b) in 7 out of 7 classrooms observed. Further, the classroom observations revealed that only 4 of the 7 instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c). These observations suggest that pacing and rigor are areas of needed improvement at Christel House Academy South middle and high schools.

Classroom observations did that some classrooms instructors did engage in a variety of different strategies in teaching, with 3 of 7 classrooms observed using differentiated instruction to meet the varied interests, styles and learning needs of students (indicator d) and many of the lesson plans did include a variety of strategies, suggesting that differentiation was occurring. Like the elementary school lesson plans, differentiation strategies were not explicitly labeled on the lesson plans.

As part of the TAP system, school leaders provided regular feedback to the staff on instructional practices, with the TAP master teachers available to provide input during cluster meetings, faculty meetings or in informal talks (indicator e).

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South middle and high school teachers receive regular feedback on teaching practices as part of TAP. This information is being effectively used to improve classroom practices.

Recommendations: Additional focus on ensuring that lesson plans are of a uniformly high quality and contain enough information to aid in quality instruction across the curriculum.

Additional focus on explicitly planning for differentiated instruction in the classroom, with a notation on the lesson plans.

Christel House Academy South

High School

4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) there is a lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities exist for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) there is a lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities exist for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Meets standard	The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.

No significant concerns were found.

Interviews with the College and Career Specialists revealed that Christel House Academy South offers dual credit courses through Ivy Tech and the University of Indianapolis (indicator a). The faculty reports that the high school curriculum is designed so that all students have the opportunity to earn an Academic Honors diploma at the end of their high school career (indicator e). The students all reported that they were challenged academically at Christel House Academy South, and that there were many opportunities to engage in challenging coursework. The students also reported that the majority of the classroom instructors had high expectations for their students and were encouraging them to pursue post-secondary academic opportunities (indicator b). Christel House Academy South goes above and beyond to ensure that students are aware of post-secondary options, and both encourages students to have high goals and celebrates their successes (indicator c). Christel House Academy South also provides staff dedicated to college counseling, plans college visits for students, to different universities and ACT preparation.

In addition to a full array of supports for post-secondary educational opportunities, CHA has also added more supports for students who want to pursue vocational educational opportunities. The Work Study Coordinator works with both current students and graduates of Christel House Academy South who are exploring options beyond college, and works to provide them with information regarding their options. She has also organized trips to local manufacturing locations, such as the Subaru plant in Lafayette.

Christel House Academy South also provides a wealth of extracurricular activities to increase post-secondary options (indicator d) such as athletics, including baseball and basketball for both boys and girls, Cross Country, Soccer and Track and Field. Christel House Academy South also offers academic clubs such as the National Honors Society, Spanish Club and the student newspaper.

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South both encourages and celebrates their students in their higher-education goals.

Christel House Academy South provides strong supports for students' secondary education goals throughout all four years of high school.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Christel House Academy South

Elementary School

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.

No significant concerns were found.

Although Christel House Academy South leadership and staff examine school wide student data independently across the elementary, middle and high schools, they do share a common set of procedures and practices, as well as all benefiting from the data expertise of Ms. Weimer. Ms. Weimer related that she is responsible for "keeping her finger on the pulse" of Christel House Academy South. Ms. Weimer examines student data at the level of the entire Christel House network, including Christel House DORS, as well as at the individual school level, and finally, down the level of individual classrooms. Additionally, in collaboration with Ms. Westerman and Mr. Lance, performs progress monitoring on students and the teaching staff as well. As Ms. Weimer noted, "we are so small that we can see how each class or each student is doing.-- often there is only one teacher in each subject level.. so we can align student data performance to the individual teacher. Then in cluster they have conversations about the data, as well as in ELA department meetings and Math department meetings (indicators d & e). These assessments are then used to provide professional development to individual staff members or the make adjustments to the curriculum as it is being developed.

Elementary & Middle Schools

Christel House Academy South administers standardized and classroom assessments that are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives (indicator a), and are

administered with sufficient frequency to inform instructional decisions effectively (indicator d). Specifically, at the school-wide level, the elementary school administers Acuity three times a year, as well as assessments provided by the Envision curriculum through Pearson's SuccessNet, ISTEP, and IREAD-3. Additional assessments used are DIBELS, which are administered 3 times a year, and a full complement of regular classroom assessments.

Teachers noted in the focus group that the data is disseminated quickly and presented in a way that is useful for differentiating instruction and determining student weaknesses (indicator b). Preliminary Acuity scores are presented and recorded at the end of each testing session, and the Acuity score data and reports are analyzed and discussed during TAP cluster meetings. The assessments administered at CHA-South display a sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of learning abilities (indicator c).

High School

Christel House Academy South high school administers End of Course Assessments (ECA's) as well as the assessments associated with the Springboard ACT curriculum that is being implemented at the high school, with additional classroom assessments administered by classroom instructors (indicator a). ACT is taken in the Junior and Senior year and the results of these tests are made available to faculty to incorporate into curricular review (indicator d). Focus group interviews with the CHA teaching staff revealed that they also perform in class pre-tests at weeks 2, 9 and 16 to check on the student growth in their classroom. These assessments are part of what the teaching staff called a "culture of revision" at Christel House Academy South that encourages students to revise educational products until they have reached a high level of quality. The goal of a culture of revision is based on student data and goals defined during TAP meetings.

The high school staff described a focus on longitudinal data gathering that spans previous years data. Longitudinal data is used to identify areas in which students are excelling, enabling the teachers to "keep the higher level kids moving and challenged," as well as to identify students who are struggling in order "coordinate with the interventionists and they make sure they are targeting the kids who need it." They described a process of creating class structures based on data that allowed them to target students in Language Arts and Math, and then coordinate the different types of support being offered to each student, such as push-in versus pull-out tutoring, or if a student has been struggling for the long-term, they designed a specific intervention that could include pull-out remediation or extra time to do their classwork (indicator b).
(indicator e.)

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South uses a wide-variety of standardized and classroom based assessments, and disseminate the data quickly and in a useful manner to the teaching staff.

Christel House Academy South uses standardized assessment data to improve instruction at the school-wide curricular level and also at the student-level.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Christel House Academy South

4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.

No significant concerns were found.

Christel House Academy South has developed consistent hiring practices to ensure that all new hires are fully qualified and have been approved by several members of the CHA management team. New staff members are supported during their first year at Christel House Academy South through the TAP program, with new faculty being assigned mentoring teacher to provide support and to discuss any problems or answer any questions that new staff members may have (indicator a). New staff members are also informally observed on a more frequent basis, and have additional coaching opportunities embedded into the 6-week coaching cycle that is available to all Christel House Academy South teachers. All teachers at Christel House Academy South are certified or credentialed in their teaching area, or have the appropriate licensure to teach (indicator c). The teachers are teaching course loads that are manageable, and the various staff members have distinct roles (indicator b). Overall, the staff is deployed to best utilize their skills and training.

Teachers report that they have considerable opportunities to engage in professional development through the TAP framework, as well as through the coaching cycle that was in place before TAP. The coaching cycle is comprised of 6 week cycles in which a Master Teacher will work with that faculty on their teaching skills, often focusing on instructional plans, content area teaching, or overall topics such as literacy standards for the content-area teachers. Each teacher will receive three 6-week cycles each academic year. The faculty are often grouped within the 6 week cycles according to the

house structure, but are also placed into groups based on common content-area instruction during the school year.

Professional development is determined through data analyses performed within the TAP structure, with a "virtual data wall" available to all of the teaching staff (indicator e). The virtual data wall includes longitudinal data for each student for the last 3 years (as noted by the high school faculty in Standard 4.1). The staff color codes the data based on the student's mastery of the material or passing scores on assessments. The virtual data wall is also used to determine tiers for Response to Intervention. Each house further uses the data on the data wall in weekly meetings regarding RTI and individual student's place within the RTI structure.

The TAP comprehensive teacher evaluation framework that is currently being implemented at Christel House Academy South (indicator f). The teaching staff at both schools conveyed that they fully understood the teacher evaluation framework and found it to be an effective evaluation tool.

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South effectively uses student achievement data to determine professional development needs.

Implementation of the TAP system has led to very effective data-use and a well documented teacher evaluation which has led to improved teacher performance.

TAP data use and initiatives are being effectively used to guide the Response to Intervention program at Christel House Academy South.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Christel House Academy South

4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>both</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Meets standard	The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.

No significant concerns were found.

The school mission is well understood by all stakeholders at Christel House Academy South. The teaching staff clearly stated their belief that their mission is to "teach the child as a whole," or to "provide quality teaching to the whole child.. to teach them how to be a productive citizen. " A similar vision was expressed by the focus on Life Skills as part of the mission of CHA-South. Teacher noted that they work to teach students necessary life skills such as "how to introduce themselves, how to ask "please" and noted that "this school allows me to work with the students on these skills." Others noted the role of leadership, team building and community building among Christel House Academy South students.

Another strong theme present in stakeholders interviews was the goal of "breaking the cycle of poverty through education. One teacher noted, "the vision of breaking the cycle of poverty by keeping kids in school is very important to me. That's why we don't send kids off to other schools, and that's why we give students every chance the need." Another teacher noted the role of Christel House Academy South in the overall mission of the Christel House schools, sharing that "one of my student's mother is a student at Christel House DORS--they do their homework together. It's a family education."

Finally, the staff expressed their appreciation for the small size of the school and the fact that grades K-12 are all in one building. As she noted, " I know all the kids —and the siblings and the parents. Our school has a family feel to it. I know the family's issues and problems and have for years." The feeling being part of a large family is reinforced by the practice of home visits. This practice is appreciated by all stakeholders; teachers, parents and students. The teaching staff feels that the home visits "really make a difference--- that parents let me come in to their home." Others noted that it often leads to a different relationship with the student, who will sometimes "open up and communicate more. It shows that we care."

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South has a compelling mission that is instantiated daily in the life of the school.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Christel House Academy South

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.

No significant concerns were found.

Christel House Academy South elementary, middle and high schools all share a common Family Handbook that describes a straightforward incremental discipline policy comprised of Office Referrals, Suspensions and Expulsions. A list of inappropriate behaviors that would result in an Office Referral, as well as behaviors that are punishable by suspensions or expulsions are also clearly described. Consequently, the disciplinary policy has a clearly stated set of behavioral rules that enforce positive behavior (indicator a) and possesses high expectations for student behavior (indicator b).

Interactions between students and faculty were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c). Focus group interviews with the teaching staff at Christel House Academy South revealed that, overall, the teaching staff believes that the school climate at both schools is conducive to providing a high quality education. Both groups of teachers noted, however, that there is a small group of students who consistently disrupt class and misbehave during school. The teaching staff relayed that these particular student can "monopolize a lot of the teacher's time--- time spent addressing their behavior and not educating the class."

These students are often sent out of the class, usually to the offices of the Head of Elementary or the Head of Secondary. According to the teaching staff, these students will often be sent back to the classroom before they are ready to learn and will again disrupt the class. Another common outcomes is that the student is kept out of class for an extensive period and will miss important information, which has to be made up during the teacher's lunch or prep time. It is important to note the number of disruptive students is quite small, and that overall the teaching staff feels that the school culture is good.

When asked about the impact of a small number of disruptive students, Mr. Carey Dahncke, Chief Academic Officer for the Christel House Academy Network, explained that many of these students have come to CHA-South from other schools and were struggling to adjust to a new set of behavioral expectations. Mr. Dahncke also noted that the student support staff included a School Counselor, a Social Worker and a Student Advisor. These support staff members are available to help students acclimate to the culture of Christel House Academy South, but that with the recent influx of students from other schools, there were quite a few students needing their services. It is expected that the number of disruptive students will decrease as the academic year progresses and the students adjust to their new school.

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South provides students with an easily understood and well-implemented discipline policy.

There are considerable student supports in place at Christel House Academy South, in the form of caring and dedicated teachers, a trained Counselor, as well as a school Social Worker and a Student Advisor.

Recommendations: Greater communication with the teaching staff regarding the progress being made with the group of disruptive students, so that they are aware of the solutions being implemented.

Christel House Academy South

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).

No significant concerns were found.

Christel House Academy South has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents (indicator a), with the teaching staff using a variety of ways to communicate with parents. These communications take the form of school newsletters, classroom newsletters from each teacher, behavior reports sent home daily or weekly, parent-teacher conferences held four times a year, phone messenger systems, emails, phone calls and face to face discussions. All of these communications methods are used throughout the school year (indicator b). The teachers noted that the content of communication with parents are substantive and valuable for both teachers and parents.

Christel House Academy South communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents through parent/teacher conferences in which teachers explain grades and test results from Acuity and ISTEP. Additionally, progress reports are sent home at a minimum of once per quarter and some teachers choose to communicate with parents more frequently, providing parent with a steady flow of information. Finally, parents can access their students' grades on Powerschool.

The school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (indicator d), with many school materials translated into Spanish. Further, teachers offer extended times to meet with parents during conference week, or will come into school early, schedule meetings during school hours and after hours.

Focus group meetings with parents revealed that they are happy with the quality and amount of communication provided by CHA-South. They noted that the teaching staff communicates with them using a variety of methods, including email, phone calls and conversations during drop-off and pick-up.

Areas of Strength: Christel House Academy South staff are friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with a information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Christel House Academy South

4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is moving towards best practice?	
Does not meet standard	The school's special education files present concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) do not adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP does not have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) all goals are not rigorous or based on state or national learning standards; d) evidence does not demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student developed; e) specifically designed curriculum is not outlined.
Approaching standard	The school's special education files present concerns in <u>one</u> or more of the following areas: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) do not adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP does not have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) all goals are not rigorous or based on state or national learning standards; d) evidence does not demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student developed; e) specifically designed curriculum is not outlined.
Meets standard	All of the following are evident in the school's special education files: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP has a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) each goal is rigorous and is based on state and national learning standards; d) explicit evidence exists to demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student develops; e) specifically designed curriculum is outlined.

No significant concerns were found.

This report compiles a review of all practices and procedures specific to special education services at the Christel House Academy South (CHA). The results of this evaluation are based on the following pieces of data collected onsite: classroom observations, review of internal processes and procedural manuals, interviews with general education and special education staff, students with IEPs, review of 25% of IEPs housed at CHA, DOE data bases, CHA website, and follow up interviews with families of students with IEPs at CHA.

All of the following are evident in the school's special education files: (a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; (b) each need identified within the IEP has a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; (c) each goal is rigorous and is based on state and national learning standards; (d) explicit evidence exists to demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student develops; (e) specifically designed curriculum is outlined.

The quality of the special education services offered by Christel House Academy is exceptional. File audits revealed that CHA is writing high quality and applicable IEPs (4.9 a, b, c, d, & e), have implemented a systemic 504 process, and they have a strong RTI process in place. The next opportunity for CHA to grow is navigating it's own growth and success. CHA has grown into 5 separate and fully functioning LEAs (CHA South, DORS South, Watanabe High School, CHA West, and DORS West). Navigating special education services across a "district" this size can be a challenge.

Christel House Academy South

4.10. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?	
Does not meet standard	The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve conditions such as the following: a) appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; b) relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Approaching standard	The school is not yet completely fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: a) appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; b) relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: a) appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; b) relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.

Ms. Myrna DeAgostino is the ESL coordinator for Christel House Academy South. Ms. DeAgostino is very knowledgeable in current legislation regarding the education of ESL students and is familiar with Indiana's English Language Proficiency Standards. Ms. DeAgostino reported that she has participated in professional development opportunities relating to effective best practices in the field of ESL through the Indiana Department of Education in ESL education, as well as several webinars on the topic.

Ms. DeAgostino is also very familiar with the Indiana Department of Education Office of English Language Learning & Migrant Education Guidelines to Satisfy Legal Requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Ms. Meyers employs effective ESL practices to ensure that Christel House Academy South school is in compliance with these standards. Specifically, Christel House Academy South students are initially self-identified based on their answers to the Home Language Survey. Once they have been identified, their level of proficiency is identified, within the mandated 30 days. Christel House Academy South students are provided with both push-in and pull-out services, and supports and services are provided to help with their socio-emotional adjustments as well (indicator a).

Ms. DeAgostino also ensures that relationships with students, parents and external providers are well-managed and comply with the law (indicator b). As noted above, Ms. DeAgostino provides services that comply with Indiana state law, as well as with the standards and best practices required by the Indiana Department of Education.

It was noted, by the teaching staff that there is a definite need for additional staffing in ELL. In particular, it was noted that Ms. DeAgostino and her staff provide excellent ESL services but "they are spread too thin." The strain on the ELL staff has been noted by school leadership, and in order to provide some relief for the ELL staff several classroom teachers are trained, or are about to be trained, in the SIOPS program for ELL learners. The goal of the school leadership is to " make their gen ed teachers their ELL teachers— everybody is an ELL teacher. The training will benefit all of our students because what's good practice for ELL will give teachers another tool for everyone."

The teaching staff at CHA-South are enthusiastic about the SIOP training and all of them expressed a willingness to be trained. They were more sanguine, however, about the SIOP training solving the need for more ELL trained staff. As they noted "SIOP training won't be enough. It will help the staff and we want the chance to implement it. But we need more ELL staff."

Christel House Academy South Classroom Observation Summary

Sixteen classrooms were observed using the instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. Each observation lasted approximately 30 minutes, and over half of the teaching staff was observed once. Classroom observers spent 7.6 hours (456 minutes) observing 16 classrooms, 348 students, and 16 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 29 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 21.7:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

94% (15/16) had posted objectives. 69% (11/16) had posted state standards. 81% (13/16) used critical vocabulary. 87% (14/16) had challenging content. 37% (6/16) exhibited differentiation. 12% (2/16) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 81% (13/16) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 87% (14/16) were Apply/Perform Activities. 6% (1/16) was Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 6% (1/16) were Create/Design Activities 0% (0/16) of activities were found to be ineffective.

75% (12/16) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 81% (13/16) showed examples of exemplary work. 75% (12/16) displayed a daily schedule. 87% (14/16) had posted behavior expectations. 18% (3/16) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 16 (100%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 16 (100%) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Student engagement was fairly consistent. Please see the table below.

Proportion of Students Engaged During:	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
	#	% Total	#	% Total	#	% Total	#	% Total	#	% Total
First Interval	5	31%	10	63%	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	4	24%	10	64%	1	6%	1	6%	0	0%
Third Interval	3	18%	9	58%	3	18%	1	6%	0	0%